



PLACER COUNTY WATER AGENCY
SINCE 1957
BUSINESS CENTER PHONE
144 Ferguson Road 530.823.4860
MAIL 530.823.4960 - fax
P.O. Box 6570 WWW.PCWA.NET
Auburn, CA 95604

NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: David A. Breninger, (530) 823-4860

or: Dave Carter, (530) 265-NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

PCWA Moves Forward on Countywide Master Plan

AUBURN - The Placer County Water Agency has identified areas in many parts of the county where safe drinking water needs are unserved or underserved, it was reported at Thursday's (Oct. 6) meeting of the PCWA Board of Directors.

The areas -- mostly in the foothills and Tahoe Basin -- have been studied as part of a countywide master planning process authorized last year by the PCWA Board of Directors.

In a progress report, PCWA Deputy Director of Technical Services Brent Smith said the agency has been working closely with the Placer County Dept. of Environmental Health and the Placer County Local Agency Formation Commission in contacting approximately 100 public and private water suppliers that serve various parts of the county.

Placer County Director of Environmental Health Jill Pahl attended the meeting and expressed support for the master planning effort. She said it could lead to opportunities for improved availability of drinking water to many Placer County residents.

The master planning process has included local water utility surveys, identification of unserved and underserved areas, and setting priorities for water system improvements.

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Smith said that survey results show that many of the underserved foothill areas are far from existing public water infrastructure and that extending service to many of these areas is very expensive. He said PCWA engineers envision an expanded “backbone” of the water system from which future extensions and water service could become available.

The northern and western shores of Lake Tahoe are presently served by 23 water utilities, some public and some privately-owned, Smith said. He described efforts to link the various systems for better water service and improved fire protection.

The presentation drew a small audience from the Colfax-Meadow Vista area, where residents have sought affordable water system improvements. Three speakers thanked the water agency for its progress on the master plan.

Smith said the water agency is about midway through the two-year planning process. The master plan was authorized in September 2010 by the PCWA board. Directors at that time indicated that future hydroelectric power revenues from the Middle Fork American River Project would be considered in helping to fund some of the water system improvements.